

church paper. A few years ago I met one of our Ohio brethren in the ministry who was neither a subscriber nor a reader of our own paper. Thus he had very little knowledge of the condition of the general church, and yet he was diligently seeking a charge, tho I never heard of his finding what he sought. I know our paper is not received into as many homes as we would wish, yet I think our proportionate number of subscribers is greater than that of many larger denominations. We have one subscriber to about every six members of the church, while one of the larger denominations of the United States some time ago reported only one subscriber of their denominational paper to about every thirty members of the church. The knowledge of the condition of other churches and their publications should drive from our minds all discouraging thoughts and help us to look with stronger faith upon the final success of our own.

Perhaps the greater portion of responsibility for the number of papers received in each congregation rests upon the pastor of the church. And yet, in my opinion, it is not best for the pastor to act as a personal solicitor for subscriptions, tho he should give his help in the way of counsel and encouragement to the agent appointed. Frequent mention of the virtues of the paper can very properly be made from the pulpit and in the sermon, and yet one must exercise judgment even in this, for some people are very sensitive about such matters. I distinctly remember recommending one of our younger brethren as pastor to a certain church official, who replied, "Oh, we don't want him; they say that he is continually talking missions and the publishing house." But we may safely say, where the matter is overdone by one pastor it is underdone by a dozen more. If our pastors will but realize the power of a united effort on their part in endeavoring to place our church paper in more homes, and then act up to their knowledge they will discover the mutual benefit of their efforts and find that their labors are very much lightened thru the ministry of the BRETHREN EVANGELIST.

Milledgeville, Ill.

THE EXPENSE OF BELIEVING

C. H. WETHERBE

It has cost many Christians a great deal of suffering to believe certain truths of the Bible which they had long been very unwilling to believe. They had been greatly prejudiced against certain doctrines which are contained in the Bible, and which many others had accepted, and before they themselves believed them they had hard work to rid their minds of that prejudice. It was a great struggle which they passed thru in coming to believe those truths.

From an editorial in the Western Christian Advocate I take the following valuable words: "Men should be glad to part with any old errors they may have been cherishing—the

result of false teaching, unsound tradition, or too heedless thinking—and welcome the truer and better knowledge. 'Is it safe?' It is the only thing that is safe. It is never safe to cling to error after one knows it is error. It will irritate the whole spiritual nature. To change one's opinions, to revise one's scheme of thought in a large way, may not be pleasant or comfortable. Said a friend to us one day, 'But it is more comfortable for me to believe the old way!' But what had his comfort to do with the case, if the new facts demanded his acceptance?"

Sure enough! One chief reason why many Christians do not break away from some of the gross errors which they are holding to is because they do not want to be at the expense of doing so. It would cost them a profound struggle to tear up by the roots their old beliefs. It would deeply pain them to lose the close friendship of those who are socially near to them if they were to throw off certain beliefs, and hence practices, for those friends would be offended at them if they did so. When Martin Luther gave up some of his old Romish beliefs he lost the friendship of a large number whom he had long loved. It was at great expense to his heart that he came to believe in the grand truths of the Bible. He passed thru a terrible struggle, but it paid him. Peter was at large expense, too, in getting rid of his error in regard to the purposes of Christ's gospel and kingdom, but what a splendid gain he made, not only for himself but also for thousands of people, even in his day! Give up your errors, as soon as you discover them at any cost! Determine to buy the truth and all the truth that you can secure.

The Home

At Family Prayers

I can see him now, thru the mist of years—
Grandfather, bent and gray—
And feel the hush of the twilight hour,
When he'd always read and pray.
Before the hearth, in his easy chair,
The open Book on his knee,
He'd draw up the flickering candle light,
That he might more clearly see.
Then slowly he'd turn the well-worn leaves,—
His thoughts were not fixed below—
Till he found the passage he had in mind,
Whose lessons we ought to know.
The promise so sweetly he read us then,
Of Jehovah's wondrous grace—
Then a pause, to see if response he read
In each interested face.
And after the reading (I'll ne'er forget),
As with sandals of the gospel shod,
He led us by counsels wise and meet,
More closely to walk with God.
Tenderly, slowly, he closed the Book,
And, placing it in his chair,
Knelt, and committed us to the Lord,
In his simple, earnest prayer.
Grandfather's corner is vacant now,
But still in my dreams I see
The little circle at worship there,
Around him on bended knee.

—Adelbert F. Caldwell.

Progressive Christianity

It is always interesting to note what the secular press has to say on religious questions of the day. In fact it is a matter of no small interest to note that the secular press, with the political, sporting, and criminal news it has to dish out to its readers, takes any account at all of religious questions. Whether Christianity is losing or gaining ground is one of the live questions of the day, and of late the secular press is taking a hand in the discussion. The Louisville Courier Journal has been compiling statistics bearing upon the growth of the Christian religion, so far as figures have anything to do with the progress of religion. The figures which the Courier has taken great pains to gather give some idea of the magnitude of the work which is being quietly carried on thru-out Christendom. The Outlook in commenting on the figures presented says:

"The growth of the population of the United States in one hundred years was about thirteen fold, but the church membership has increased almost four times as fast as our rapidly growing population. But what about growth in benevolence, missions, and spirituality? These count immensely in measuring the influence of the church. No figures can be made to describe fully the growth of the church in spirituality, yet there are certain considerations which will throw much light upon the matter. There has been commendable growth in moral standards both among ministers and Christian people in general, and increased activity in many directions indicates great spiritual growth. The figures tell a wonderful story of development in missions, education, and benevolence. A hundred years ago a half-million dollars would probably cover everything raised for these purposes; now the churches of this country spend annually over twenty eight millions for hospitals, orphanages, and other benevolence; five and a half millions for foreign missions, and an equal or greater sum for home missions.

The Sentinel, a secular paper published in Indianapolis, takes up the discussion in an editorial headed "Progressive Christianity," in which the editor says:

The common assertion that the Christian religion has not been holding its own during the last half century is not borne out by the facts. No observing person at all familiar with the condition of the past would have the hardihood to claim that the world has not been growing grander and better during the century just closed. The spirit of fraternity has been more in evidence in the relationships of men and nations. The vast expenditure of money on works of charity and benevolence has never before been approached during any similar period of the world's history.

Many people, however, who admit indi-